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# LABORATORY BULLETIN

MONTANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
HELENA, MONTANA



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Editor

## COSTS OF LABORATORY PROCEDURES IN THE STATE LABORATORY

We frequently receive inquiries concerning the costs of tests done in our laboratory. Here is the information we use for program planning and budgeting. It is based on total annual expenditures of \$150,711. The State General Fund supplied \$73,697 (49%) of this while \$77,014 (51%) came from Federal Sources. Expenditures having to do with performance of laboratory tests were \$133,880 (89%). A total of 75,314 examinations were performed. Here is a schedule of costs for the major procedures (includes cost of container for submitting specimen and costs of reporting to the physician).

1. Throat culture for beta-hemolytic streptococci with serological grouping if positive	\$1.10
2. Guthrie screening test for phenylketonuria in newborn babies	1.50
3. Culture for acid-fast organisms	6.50
4. Antibiotic-sensitivity testing on mycobacteria	10.00
5. Bacteriological culture for identification of organism	5.00
6. Antibiotic sensitivity test on pure culture	7.50
7. Rubella hemagglutination-inhibition test to determine immunity to German measles	1.95
8. Tissue-culture on specimen for isolation of virus with identification of any viruses recovered	22.50
9. Serologic test for viral antibodies	4.50
10. Venereal Disease Research Laboratory (VDRL) serological test for syphilis including a quantitative test if the screening test is positive	0.90
11. Fluorescent treponemal antibody absorption test (FTA-ABS)	5.00
12. Agglutination test for tularemia-brucellosis	2.00
13. Ox-cell hemolysin test for infectious mononucleosis	2.00
14. Bacteriological analysis of drinking water	3.50
15. Bacteriological analysis of water for indication of degree of stream pollution (MPN)	6.45

The Arizona laboratory law of 1969 has a section concerning costs which could serve well as part of a national code of ethics for clinical laboratories.

### ARIZONA CODES CLINICAL LABORATORIES - ADMINISTRATION Chapter 4.1 Article 1

"Section 36-472. Rebates, fee-splitting and solicitation of referrals prohibited.

A. The owner or director of a laboratory shall not personally or through an agent, solicit the referral of specimens to his or any other laboratory in a manner which offers or implies an offer of rebates to persons submitting specimens or other fee-splitting inducements or participate in any fee-splitting arrangement. This applies to contents of fee schedules, billing methods or personal solicitation. The contractual provision of laboratory services for a fixed fee independent of the number of specimens submitted for such services is declared to be a violation of this section.

B. The bill to the patient shall specify the actual charge by the reference laboratory together with the reasonable specimen collection charge by the referring laboratory or physician."

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